

SHARP News

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SHARP NEWS

Volume 12, Number 1

Winter 2003

SHARP CONFERENCE 2003

Sharpists should begin planning now for our eleventh annual summer conference, to be held from Wednesday 9 July, through Saturday 12 July 2003, at Scripps College, one of the Claremont Colleges, a consortium of five small Liberal Arts institutions in Claremont, California.

The highlight of the conference will be a Saturday day trip to the library of the Getty Research Institute, where we'll have a guided tour, listen to a panel discussion, and attend a reception courtesy of the Getty. On Thursday and Friday we'll have sessions on Women in Print Culture and on West Coast book topics; we'll also have several roundtables on bookish subjects, along with the usual papers in the various book-history areas. There will be coffee breaks and other events.

Those who wish to do so might want to arrive early and use Wednesday to visit another of the major research libraries in the area—the Huntington, perhaps, which is in San Marino, about forty-five miles away. Dorm rooms will be available preceding the conference, and information about the various collections is available through the SHARP website.

Claremont, a small city near Los Angeles, has a retrospective feel, with shady tree-lined streets, many nineteenth-century houses, lots of walkers and bicyclists, and a charming (and restaurant-filled) town center only a short walk from the conference site. SHARP activities will take place at Scripps, a small and quite charming campus with much green space and Spanish architecture.

This 2003 conference was originally planned for the UCLA campus, which would have put most of us in the usual types of hotel accommodations—Holiday Inns, Ramadas, and the like. The late shift to Claremont has meant that the most convenient (and economical) choice for housing will be the Scripps dormitories.

These dorms are rather nice. They are air-conditioned and newly renovated, and they're used in the summers only by conference-goers. Scripps offers single rooms, double rooms, or suites. The suites have two or three bedrooms, the occupants of which will share a single bathroom, but the single and double rooms do not, though each has a sink. Those staying in the single or double rooms will therefore use hall bathrooms (bring bathrobes and clogs, etc.), so we'll designate floors for men and floors for women and, if there's demand for it, co-ed floors for couples.

The upside of this brief return to Left Coast dorm life, for those who choose that option, is that the price per day will be a little over \$50.00, a figure that includes breakfast and lunch in the dorm cafeterias, where lots of other SHARP members are likely to be eating. The food is reported to be quite palatable and varied. Dinners are on your own, with many good restaurants nearby in a variety of price ranges. The local arrangements committee will provide an annotated list.

SHARP needs to make payment to Scripps for everything in advance—conference registration fees, dorm rooms and cafeteria meals—so we'll collect from you ahead of time via check or plastic. Thus dorm dwellers will be almost entirely paid up for the conference before arriving. Registration fees, as always, will be payable in advance for everyone.

Another housing option is the Claremont Inn, a private hotel within walking distance of Scripps, not a luxurious establishment but one with private bathrooms and a restaurant. And if attendees wish, they can drive to the conference in their own automobiles, or rent a car while there, and stay in a Sheraton hotel in Pomona, about seven miles away. If enough of us are at this Sheraton, we'll try to arrange a shuttle to and from the conference at specific times of day. The registration form will go up on the SHARP website shortly after the program committee's decisions on paper proposals are announced. That form will include all housing and meal options; you can check off your choice(s).

Please watch SHARP web for further particulars. Registration information and forms should go up reasonably early in the new year.

James L.W. West III
SHARP President

SHARP AWARDS

The Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing is pleased to announce competition for its sixth annual SHARP Book History Prize. A prize of \$1,000 will be awarded to the author of the best book on the history of the book, broadly defined to include the history of the creation, dissemination, and uses of script or print. All submissions must be in English and must have been copyrighted in 2002. (Translations of works originally copyrighted earlier are eligible, but the translations themselves must have been copyrighted in 2002.) Because the purpose of the prize is to honor the work of an individual scholar, or of two scholars working closely together, collections of essays by more than two authors, reference works, and collaborative projects are not eligible and will not be considered. Submissions must be in the possession of all members of the jury by March 1, 2003. Please submit three copies of each entry, one to each member of the jury.

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COPY DEADLINES

1 March
1 June
1 September
1 December

SHARP WEB:

<http://sharpweb.org>

The jury for this year's prize is: ... / 1

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LECTURES AND COURSES**Sandars Lectures in Bibliography
2003**

Professor Mirjam Foot is the Sandars Reader for 2003. She will offer three lectures entitled "Description, image and reality: aspects of bookbinding history." Individual topics are:

Thursday 20 March: Bibliography and bookbinding history

Tuesday 25 March: 'Make haste but slowly...and you will learn our art': early bookbinding manuals

Thursday 27 March: Image and reality.

All lectures commence at 5pm in the Morison Room, Cambridge University Library, Cambridge, UK.

**History of Literacy -
new course syllabus**

Professor Harvey Graff from the University of Texas at San Antonio shares his latest course syllabus with fellow SHARP-ists. "Literacy and Social Change: Historical and Comparative Perspectives" is a graduate seminar on offer in Spring 2003 which examines literacy's contributions to the shaping of the modern world and the impacts on literacy from fundamental historical social changes. Topics include communications, language, family and demographic behavior, economic development, urbanization, institutions, literacy campaigns, both political and personal changes, and the uses of reading and writing. Further details are available on the web at: <http://www.colfa2.utsa.edu/users/hgraff/BBL6973SyllabusSP03.html>

EDITOR'S NEWS

2003 represents new beginnings for many of us and it is my great pleasure and privilege to bring you the first issue of the new year. You will see old friends, cherished favourites, and some new faces. In particular, a new feature, "The SHARP Edge" will, I hope, encourage SHARP-ists to continue thinking about their teaching, research, and scholarly interactions with the same rigour, exhilaration, and keenness which characterised the formation of the Society twelve years ago. I am grateful to Eva Hemmungs Wirtén for accepting my challenge and trust that when shoulder-tapped, you will all speak with passion, honesty, and forthrightness. Carving out a space is one thing; maintaining its distinctive and creative identity is another.

I would like to thank my colleague, Fiona Black, for the excellent work she has done during her tenure as SHARP News editor. The team she assembled and the systems she devised have made my first job easy and a joy. The skills which the current team brings to the newsletter are rich indeed and I am honoured to work with you all.

As always, SHARP News relies upon volunteer contributions and I look forward to receiving a constant stream of printed and electronic matter of interest to our members. Now, who's volunteering for that next conference report?

THE SHARP EDGE

Surveying the (Battle) field: Book History, SHARP, and the Guerilla Tactics of Research

One of SHARP's more remarkable feats has been its ability to promote what Academia in general so desperately needs, yet often sorely neglects: epistemological self-reflexivity. As platforms for recurring debates regarding the institutional affinities as well as the theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses of Book History (or Print Culture, or any other similar label of choice), SHARP-L and *SHARP-News* both bear witness to this fine characteristic.

Openness of this sort is the result, I suspect, of several healthy and overlapping disciplinary as well as organizational qualities. To begin with, terms like "Book," "Print," and "Text," are intrinsically boundary objects; that is, imbued with an adequate amount of shared meaning among SHARPists, they nonetheless provide the basic resource from where radically *divergent* interpretations regarding how and why we should study these fundamental categories can continue to be mined. Book Historians are simply in sufficient agreement about the basic validity of their common undertaking to allow for utter disagreement when it comes to its implementation. By nature interdisciplinary, it is also an approach/perspective/discipline receptive enough to import new ideas and creative enough to export its own; a flexibility furthered by the commendable ambition to fuse academic as well as professional knowledge in an attempt to bridge the at times artificial gap dividing researchers and practitioners. Last but not least, as a relative *débutante* on the dance floor of higher education, Book History still actually remembers what a material looked like and what it was good for.

Having said that, one can question whether or not it is at all advisable to speak of Book History as a homogenous entity (my answer would be definitely not) and furthermore be even more cautious to equate SHARP with Book History (probably a bad idea). And yet I will be guilty of both oversights. Some sort of generalization is necessary in order to make a point and because SHARP the organization and Book

History the approach/perspective/discipline tend to converge in certain key areas critical for my line of thought, I beg of my fellow SHARPists not to judge these slips in precision too harshly.

What I want to suggest in the following is that Book History (and hence also perhaps SHARP) currently faces an imperative juncture in its academic identity formation. The thought crystallized in London this summer, when I participated in a very interesting one-day pre-SHARP 2002 conference primarily outlining the status of the many national History-of-the-Book projects currently underway around the globe. When Sydney Shep asked me to elaborate—and transfer to paper for *SHARP-News*—an opinion which I at that point only very incoherently tried to articulate, I came to the conclusion that a sensation of this kind would not have been possible unless a decisive body of knowledge now existed in the field. Its materialization in London that day proved once and for all how Book History has left infancy for adolescence. Hey, since when did this become a *problem*? you might ask. Isn't it just a good thing? Well, yes *and* no.

Two structural achievements—leaving aside invaluable individual contributions as well as the pivotal and more collective role of SHARP—strike me as being instrumental in securing this coming-of-age. One is the formation of different Centers dedicated to the study of Book History or Print Culture, either within the walls of Academia or housed in other print culture institutions such as libraries. The other, and for this particular context more relevant accomplishment, are the various impressive, large-scale, and collaborative *books* being produced on Book History. I am thinking here not only of much-needed Readers and Dictionaries, but perhaps in the first place of the national or regional History-of-the-Book projects of Canada, the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and Scotland to name a few.

Now, I want to stress with the outmost care that I do not question nor do I criticize the validity of neither the first nor the second undertaking. On the contrary. Both endeavors should be supported—morally as well as financially—to the fullest. What I would like to discuss is therefore not whether or not knowledge has been produced through these outlets, because it is obvious that it has, and that it is highly qualified to boot. What I want to discuss is what *kind* of knowledge they produce.

Let me try and clarify what I mean by centering on the book-side of things. The previously mentioned Histories-of-the-Book have undeniably helped secure a well-deserved place for Book History in Academia as well as pave the way for future research. What I want to propose is perhaps something more controversial: what if they have also reinforced a *particular form* of knowledge production that mirrors, rather than questions some of the basic presuppositions of Book History? Such a propensity is by no means unique to Book History, but it is nonetheless an important issue to tackle, and one that will not go away. Large-scale, long-term projects such as multi-volume works spanning centuries are virtually perfect objects of study within Book History. Because they pay close attention to detail and document rather than analyze, the merits of empirical work are once again underscored. Because they in most cases are records of *national* histories, they are also vehicles for nation-state construction, meaning that on a very basic level scholarship on print culture becomes in this respect part of—perhaps at certain times one with—the project which it is set to investigate.

It does not take a rocket scientist to tear my reservations to shreds. Going with the flow rather than against the grain is quite natural when we consider the nature of the undertaking itself: encapsulating—in spatial as well as temporal terms—a national or regional history will by default set certain pre-determined limits regarding what you can and cannot do. After all, these projects have not only been funded on certain premises, they must also conform to the anticipation and demands of the market. Still, I cannot help but wonder if, at a time when they make up such a large part of Book History research as to warrant a special one-day meeting, we are not witnessing an invisible solidification of a certain set of implicit structures that quite inadvertently might reinforce Book History's own inherent theoretical and methodological assumptions rather than challenge or revitalize them. No doubt, many who read this will accuse me of being thoroughly unfair, of acting as the devil's advocate, of not acknowledging enough what has been achieved, of simply wanting the impossible yesterday. Maybe so.

But my key argument is this one: as important as these large-scale projects are in themselves, they are even more important

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as repositories of knowledge *about what needs to be done in the future*. Hence, the theoretical and methodological excavation taking place through these joint efforts presents a goldmine of information on where to take Book History and perhaps also SHARP next. What are the theoretical and methodological lessons learned from these projects? What are the problems and advantages? What and where do they point to? Where is this mass of knowledge to go?

I have two suggestions on how to take these questions further. The first is quite simple and involves encouraging upcoming SHARP-conference organizers to “block off” two or possibly three panels at each conference from competing with other sessions. These should exclusively deal with questions of general interest regarding theory and method within Book History. An approach used at the 1998 Vancouver conference, I for one would like to see it made into a recurring feature at future conferences. In light of my previous misgivings, such a panel could focus on sharing with those in attendance, not only the current status of the History-of-the-Book projects, but above all on the general lessons learned from *doing them*.

The second, more difficult, and unfortunately less concrete idea, is that I think SHARP should at least consider taking a more proactive role in providing a venue where increasingly interdisciplinary and international collaborative projects in Book History could be explored. SHARP cannot and should not prescribe the kind of research Book Historians should do: that would be fatal. However, SHARP does have a unique possibility to use its different fora to make things happen, to stimulate debate, to bring about new constellations of people, perhaps even to seek out and address some of the needs that now—considering the very real ground that has been broken—can be discerned.

If the ongoing History-of-the-Book projects have been benevolent, even inspired crusades, then I remain convinced that the next step involves a different kind of research warfare. Increasingly thematical and much more transnational, we need Book History to question old truths regarding method and theory as well as the basic requirement of the nation-state as our given investigative point-of-departure. It will demand more work, it will definitely require more money, but the rewards of a leaner “guerilla-tactics” could possibly overshadow some of the more

practical obstacles and carve out a new and exciting role for Book History and SHARP.

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CALLS FOR PAPERS

Across the Great Divide

Location: Edinburgh, Scotland
Dates: 18-21 July 2003

The STAR [Scottish Trans-Atlantic Relations] Project is collaborating with *Symbiosis*, a journal of Anglo-American literary relations, to hold the Fourth Symbiosis Conference. The conference invites papers on all aspects of literary, theoretical, and material transatlantic cultural exchange between the British Isles and the Americas; panel proposals are also welcomed.

This meeting will coincide with a major exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland that will investigate the impact of Scottish emigration to North America on both the emigrants and the indigenous people they encountered. The conference events will take place in conjunction with both the Museum of Scotland and the National Library of Scotland.

Proposals of approximately 300 words and a brief CV should be submitted by February 28, 2003 to:

Elisabeth Dodds
Centre of Canadian Studies
21 George Square
Edinburgh, Scotland EH8 9LD
elisabethdodds@star-project.org

Conference information can be accessed online at: <<http://www.star.ac.uk>>

The STAR Project website also includes teaching resources, e-texts, images and announcements about research seminars.

Elements of Design: The Role of Book Design in Children's Literature

Location: San Diego, CA, USA
Dates: 27-30 December 2003

Children's literature, with its collaboration of visual and verbal elements, has been a significant testing ground for innovative graphic design. Design becomes the framework for the text and illustration; it provides the visual shape of a text. In recent years, graphic designers have had an increasingly important role in the creation of children's books by contributing to the overall look, tone, and reception of the text. Many graphic designers - including Walter Crane, William Nicholson, C.B. Fall, Seymour Chwast, Leo Lionni, Eric Carle, Donald Crews, Molly Bang, Maira Kalman, J. Otto Seibold, Lois Ehlert, Molly Leach, and Lane Smith - have created influential children's texts which challenge the assumptions of what constitutes children's book design. This session invites papers which critically examine the often-overlooked role of designers and the influence of design and typographical elements in children's books. Papers should theorize how the designer and design elements contribute to the meaning of the book.

Two-page abstracts or finished 8-10 page papers are due by 15 March 2003 to:

Jan Susina
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In order to be a panel member, you must be a member of MLA [Modern Language Association] by 1 April 2003 and as this session is arranged by the Children's Literature Association, participants also need to be members of ChLA. Please provide a phone number, e-mail, and contact information where you can be reached in March 2003.

RELATED SOCIETY

Check out the Children's Books History Society at <http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/uni_spe_osb_cbhs.jsp> Enjoy!

Printing and the worlds of learning

Location: Downing College, Cambridge

Dates: 5 & 6 January 2004

The Printing Historical Society, in association with the Cambridge Bibliographical Society and the Textbook Colloquium, is pleased to announce its 2004 Conference and requests interested people to submit abstracts for papers to be presented to the Conference. In addition to the papers, participants will have opportunities to visit the famous Wren Library at Trinity College Cambridge, the recently built Quinlan Terry Library at Downing College, the Rampant Lions Press, and at Cambridge University Library, Stanley Morison's Library and the 'bibliographical' press.

The conference theme relates printing and printing history to education and learning. Printing has contributed to learning at all levels and to the educational sector since its inception in a wide variety of ways. This conference will consider the past, present and future of these relationships. Three broad aspects may be addressed: printing and the universities, printing and schools, and printing for learning beyond academia.

Printing and universities: university printers, university presses and printing houses, university censorship of printing, printing history as an academic study, university libraries and printing history, bibliographical presses for training academics

Printing and schools: printing and literacy, printing and textbooks, school presses, training the printer

Printing and learning beyond academia: non-university printing museums and libraries; private and fine presses; printing and self-help; printing as rehabilitation.

Abstracts of one page and a short CV should be submitted before 1 April 2003. Papers up to 40 minutes, reports on work in progress and proposals for complete panels will be considered.

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CONFERENCE REPORT

The Community Library

Library History Group of the
Chartered Institute of Librarians and
Information Professionals
Glasgow, Scotland, 19 August 2002.

This conference, held in the magnificent premises of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons took as its theme 'The Community Library', a generic phrase coined by the American library historian Paul Kaufman in the 1960s to describe that kind of library which is founded by and for a local community, and which Kaufman used especially to depict numerous libraries established in Scotland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries before the coming of the municipal free library.

Ruth Clayton spoke on the question of which 'community' was meant to benefit from the foundation in the late 19th century by Gladstone of St. Deiniol's Library in the small Welsh village of Hawarden, Flintshire. Her main thesis was that despite any contrary perceptions, Gladstone's library was never really intended for use by the local general population, despite the adoration which was regularly shown to the 'grand old man' by the masses. At the time of its establishment the village was kept entirely in the dark about the purpose of the library, and Clayton made the point that many locals today still have little idea about its function.

Peter Hoare gave a detailed paper on the operative libraries of Nottingham, a city with an impeccable radical tradition during the 19th century. The operative libraries sprang up in the 1830s as a working-class backlash to the failures of other top-down philanthropically inspired alternatives, such as Mechanics' Institutes and local Artizan libraries. Hoare traced their origins from various pubs in working-class areas of the city and nearby outlying communities, showing how they were geographically centred in a few localities, rather than being evenly spread.

Harry Auret examined the issue of community libraries for black South Africans in rural South Africa. Auret noted the importance of the traditional oral culture in such deprived and non-literate communities and commented that the imported Western

model of the public library was not appropriate in these circumstances. To be successful in rural black South African communities, where life needs were often very basic, librarians had to use oral communication channels, including the important women's and other self-organised groups, and had to be themselves active in the local community. Certain similarities between contemporary community library practice in South Africa and community driven libraries amongst the working-class in 19th century Britain were quite striking.

Bob Duckett outlined the variety of public libraries to be found in Yorkshire serving a variety of communities. He began by noting the long and relatively well-organised tradition of village and Mechanics' Institute libraries in the county during the 19th century, and included an interesting tangential discussion on where the Bronte sisters had obtained their reading matter. Duckett created a typology for public library buildings in the county, dividing them into six categories which moved from the major town library buildings at the end of the 19th century, through the 'flowering' of library architecture in the 1930s to modern community libraries of today, with their mixed use buildings.

Keith Manley gave a paper packed with names, dates and places, which examined the position of subscription and circulating libraries in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Scotland. Manley outlined the distinction between circulating libraries, from which books were hired, and true subscription (or proprietary) libraries, where members paid not only an annual subscription to borrow books, but also owned the library and premises through the purchase of shares. Circulating libraries originated in the booksellers' practice of lending out their stock for a fee. Manley noted that it was unusual in Scotland for a town to have a flourishing proprietary library if the locality already enjoyed a circulating library.

The final paper from Jean Everitt examined another example of libraries and reading rooms originating in working-class communities as an outward expression of self-help. These were the libraries associated with the Co-operative movement, which although tracing its roots to Robert Owen, is normally acknowledged to have begun in Rochdale in the 1840s as a trading, rather

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than an educational or recreational movement. Supported and frequented by the upper end of the working-class (regular employment being required for continued membership of the local co-op), these libraries, whose peak period lay between the 1860s and 1880s, were initially strongly linked to the spreading of co-operative philosophy and practice, and also to enhancing the educational opportunities of its members. Co-op libraries provided more for their local communities than just reading matter, running classes, lectures and other cultural (and increasingly recreational) events. Other items, ranging from scientific instruments to bedpans, could also form part of a Co-op society's library stock. Co-op libraries belonged to their local communities in a way that public libraries have never been able to emulate.

There was much food for thought in the variety of papers presented at the Conference, but I would have liked more discussion on the nature of the community library, an aspect that was taken as read rather than explored. What precisely does the phrase mean? After all, every library could be seen as belonging to the community, no matter how broad or narrow, which supports and uses it, be it an academic, special or working-class library. Do community libraries belong to a past period? What characterised them? What made them successful? What brought about their demise? This conference helped to tease out some tentative answers, but perhaps an overarching discussion at the end might have helped to firm up any genuine conclusions. Nevertheless this conference, the first such LHG sponsored event to be held in Scotland, was an undoubted success.

Chris Baggs

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The British Book Trade Index

Although it is already used by a number of SHARP members, primarily those working on the history of the book trade in England and Wales, the British Book Trade Index is not as widely known in the book history community as it deserves to be. Previously available only on disk, BBTI is

now being developed at the University of Birmingham, with financial support from the Arts and Humanities Research Board. The project will upgrade the existing database to form the centrepiece of a Web-based research resource for book trade history. BBTI is an index to sources of information on book-trade people rather than a biographical dictionary. Aiming to include brief details of all those who worked in the English and Welsh¹ book trades up to 1852, the database includes booksellers, stationers, printers and publishers, as well as other related trades such as papermakers, engravers, auctioneers, ink-makers and sellers of patent medicines. A typical entry for an individual includes name, trading addresses, biographical and trading dates, brief details of book-trade and secondary trade activities, plus the source of the data and additional notes of interest.

BBTI began in 1983, under the direction of the late Professor Peter Isaac, with initial support from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and the Sir James Knott Charitable Trust. Further financial assistance was received from the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust. Recently, a grant of £175,000 from the AHRB's Resource Enhancement Scheme has enabled the launch of a three-year development project. The aim is to transfer the existing BBTI database to the Web and to enhance it by the addition of several thousand new records. The AHRB funding will also resource several small research projects to test the use of BBTI in its new form; these will include a study of book-trade networks in the Midlands. Professor Isaac, who was to have chaired the project management group, sadly died in June 2002, shortly after advising on the early stages of development work in Birmingham. The future of the BBTI is now guaranteed both by the commitment of the University of Birmingham and by the project's close liaison with the Arts and Humanities Data Service.

The potential of BBTI as a research tool is indicated by the willingness with which scholars have contributed records over almost twenty years. Since its foundation, BBTI has grown to some eighty thousand records, derived from a range of published sources, both printed and electronic, and from data submitted by the many scholars and local researchers who have generously contributed their findings.²

The research strength of the University of Birmingham's English Department in the

history of the book and the transmission of texts makes it an ideal home for the BBTI. The project, directed by Dr Maureen Bell, senior lecturer, forms the hub of a research group (staff, postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers) working on aspects of book history. Dr John Hinks, who earlier this year completed his doctoral research on the history of the book trade in Leicester, has been appointed as the BBTI Research Fellow. Under his editorial guidance, the Web version of the BBTI will become the centrepiece of a new Birmingham Web-portal for the exchange and dissemination of research information concerning book-trade history. He has also taken over editorial responsibility for *Quadrat* – the periodical bulletin of research in progress in the British book trade – founded and formerly edited by Professor Isaac. The BBTI Web development officer is Dr Mike Parry and the project management group is chaired by Professor John Feather of Loughborough University.

Although the new BBTI website <www.bbti.bham.ac.uk> is currently under construction it already contains background information on BBTI, links to other sites of interest, and news of recent developments. The database and search facility are currently being tested and will be launched in the near future. Advances in database software design since the early 1980s will enable considerably more sophisticated searches to be carried out easily with the new-style BBTI.

Further information on the project may be obtained from:

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notes

¹There is a separate Scottish Book Trade Index

²Principal printed sources from which records have been derived include: the *Dictionaries of the Printers and Booksellers who were at work in England, Scotland and Ireland 1557-1775* (Bibliographical Society, 1907-1932); Ramsden's *Bookbinders of the United Kingdom (outside London) 1780-1840* (Batsford, 1954) and Todd's *A Directory of Printers and others in Allied Trades: London and vicinity 1800-1840* (Printing Historical Society, 1972). Electronic data have been generously supplied by the British Library from the *Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue* and by Michael Turner from his records of the Stationers' Company.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

An International History of the Book?

Many of us – particularly those who are involved in one way or another in the various national histories of the book currently being written – have for some time been aware of a paradox lurking at the heart of our subject. National book trades are ostensibly the main subject of our work. However, whatever aspects of book history engage us – the attempt to reconstruct the contents of the library at Alexandria, the struggle to analyse the manuscript collection of a twelfth century monastery, or the effort to understand the reading habits of an eighteenth century scholar – those studies will tell us the same thing. The trade in texts has always been relentlessly and inescapably international. Manuscripts wander and books are traded across borders and over oceans. In what reasonable sense, then, can one study a national book trade without taking other nations' books into account? National histories of the book will always require an account of the international book trade.

Debate at the SHARP pre-conference in London in July 2002, and discussions with various colleagues from France, Germany, Holland, USA and Canada and elsewhere during the conference itself, simply confirmed the pressing necessity for us to take the first steps towards an international history of the book.

The Centre for Manuscript and Print Studies (CMPS) is a federal research group that brings together the Institute of English Studies (host of SHARP 2002), the CWPPH at the University of Reading, Birmingham University, the Open University, the British Library, St. Bride Printing Library, the Centre for Palaeography and the University of London Library. We also have links to centres in North America and Europe. It seemed sensible that the CMPS should try to contribute to coordinating and advancing work on international book history. To this end, the CMPS has agreed to set up an email discussion list with the aim of designing an international research programme that would help us move one step closer to an international history of the book.

Discussions on International Book History have, of course, been going on for

some time, in particular in a sequence of conferences for invited academics known by the two places at which the group has so far met: Sherbrooke-Prato. The third of the Sherbrooke-Prato conferences is planned for London in July 2004 and will be co-hosted by two members of the CMPS: the IES and the British Library. If the electronic discussions that are now just beginning are successful, we would hope that a research programme would be a major item on the agenda of London 2004.

What form might such a research programme take? It should have a number of features to ensure that it was robust, flexible and expandable but, at the same time, consistent enough for very different projects in very different countries to be able to compare and contrast results. It should also start modestly enough so as not to require huge amounts of initial external funding.

An international research programme might have the following characteristics:

1. Address a fundamental feature of the international history of the book and one that would be of immediate benefit to those writing the national histories of the book.

2. Cover a broad time span that would allow work on both manuscript and print cultures.

3. Include a broad geographical spread, perhaps initially centred on Europe (including Eastern Europe and Russia if appropriate) and North America but capable of quickly expanding to embrace any other part of the world that expressed interest in it.

4. Be modular in structure so that one could add additional studies, additional regions and additional periods at a later stage without disrupting the programme.

5. Share fundamentally common features – particularly methodological ones – so that, however diverse modules might be, like could be compared with like.

6. Be robust enough to allow us to begin the programme with very small amounts of external funding. Certain existing individual projects might well be included in the programme, others could be funded by individual PhD and post-doctoral grants within their originating countries. A substantial bid to an international funding agency could follow, but the programme would not be wholly dependent on its success and could begin before such an application were made.

As it is always easier to work on a concrete proposal rather than a set of principles, I thought it best to devise a draft project that might, if it did nothing else, stimulate discussion. The following is offered in that spirit.

TITLE: The commerce of text: the inter-regional exchange of texts, images, techniques and personnel in the book trade in the past.

The programme should involve printing historians and historians of culture and ideas as well as historians of publishing. It may be that many of the individual projects within the overall programme will concentrate on the cultural commerce of a specific city or area within a well-defined period, e.g.

Alexandria in the 2nd Century BCE

Rome in the 1st Century CE

Paris during part of the 13th Century

Venice during part of the 15th Century

Antwerp during part of the 17th Century

Berlin during part of the 18th Century

London during part of the 19th Century

New York during part of the 20th Century

Beijing in the early 21st Century

In practice some of these topics may already have been covered thoroughly enough in which case part of the Programme might be devoted to creating a database of existing projects to be used for comparative purposes.

Some of the richest sources of evidence for the import/export trade in texts and images will be the state and university libraries of the countries involved. As this is where most book history is being done in countries such as Poland and Russia, this approach should enable them to participate.

As you will be able to tell from the above, we are in the very earliest stages of thinking about the topic and its implications. I would therefore welcome comments and can be contacted at <s.j.eliot@reading.ac.uk>.

Simon Eliot

Centre for Writing, Publishing and Printing History

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BOOK REVIEWS

Paul C. Gutjahr and Megan L. Benton, eds. *Illuminating Letters: Typography and Literary Interpretation*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001. 198 pp. ill. ISBN 1-55849-288-7. \$34.95

A book is more than its pages, and a page is more than image and text. Paul C. Gutjahr and Megan L. Benton have edited an admirable volume that seeks to help readers see the truth of these statements. The seven essays in *Illuminating Letters: Typography and Literary Interpretation* will captivate scholars of print culture and book history, as well as introduce interested readers to the expressive nuances of typography.

In the introduction, Gutjahr and Benton situate *Illuminating Letters* within the interdisciplinary realm of print culture and the history of the book outlined in Henri-Jean Martin's *The Coming of the Book*, in which culture and commerce, design and production overlap. Readers unfamiliar with typography are provided a succinct introduction to its evolution and terminology.

The book's contributors all apply this interpretive framework to the history of printed text production. The collection begins with Paul C. Gutjahr's "The Letter(s) of the Law: Four Centuries of Typography in the King James Bible," a wide-ranging examination of the effects of typographical alteration. The next three chapters explore the mechanisms — conscious or inadvertent — by which printers and publishers affect the reception of a text. Sarah A. Kelen writes on "Peirs Plouhman (*sic*) and the formidable array of black letter in the Early Nineteenth Century," and Beth McCoy discusses "Perpetua(l) Notion: Typography, Economy, and Losing Nella Larsen." I found the fourth essay in this section, "Typography and Gender: Remasculating the Modern Book" by Megan L. Benton, most interesting. Benton reconsiders the shift that occurred in the late nineteenth century to favor the "robust" typefaces modelled on Renaissance and medieval calligraphic letterforms. Her provocative assertion is that this change represents not merely an adoption of an Arts and Crafts aesthetic, but also a genderized reaction against a Victorian book world that had become increasingly dominated by women authors and readers and by books whose typefaces resembled "sharp, small

forms" surrounded by plenty of space on the page—a style dismissed by Theodore Low DeVinne as "feminine." The remaining three chapters of *Illuminating Letters* consider the mechanisms of meaning that arise from the other side of a text's production: the author. Leon Jackson considers Edgar Allan Poe's experimentations with lithography and anastatic printing, which he hoped would provide him with greater control over the semiotics of print. Gene Kannenberg, Jr. analyzes the graphical context of the custom fonts and hands used in contemporary comics. I especially appreciated Steven R. Price's astute analysis of "The Autograph Manuscript in Print: Samuel Richardson's Type Font Manipulation in *Clarissa*." Price relates how Richardson, one of England's first novelists and a master printer, applied his extensive typographical knowledge to designing pages that enhanced the characterizations in this epistolary novel. Since I am an admirer of the typographical shenanigans in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* of 1760-67, Price's thorough study reveals, in this third edition of *Clarissa* from 1751, a fascinating precursor. My only objection with the book lies in its use of "bridges," the brief texts between chapters that relate each essay to the preceding and following chapters. Perhaps such an element will be useful for a student audience, but since the Introduction admirably summarized the book's various writerly perspectives, I found the bridges unnecessary and rather intrusive. This quibble should not deter interested readers from adding *Illuminating Letters* to their reading list, however. Through insightful analyses of the material forms of a text, the scholars in *Illuminating Letters* succeed in showing us how to "see and read the invisible."

Betty Bright
Independent Scholar

H. J. Jackson. *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001. 324 pp. ill. ISBN 0-300-08816-7. \$27.95 (cloth), \$18.95 (paperback).

The goal of Jackson, a Professor of English at the University of Toronto, is "to describe and illustrate the behavior of annotators in the English-speaking world during the past three centuries, and to test current assumptions about the potential value

of readers' notes for historical studies of reception and reader responses." Sentences underlined in pencil, ink and highlighter, as well as the surrounding margins adorned with vertical lines, squiggles, and varying legible comments should, Jackson asserts, be treated as important.

Jackson's initial work, an article on perhaps the greatest marginalianist, S. T. Coleridge, appeared in 1982. Almost twenty years later she has produced nothing less than a thrilling, thought-provoking monograph. Her sense of literary provenance, authorship, forensic insight, and the multiple levels of inference, propel this book to the forefront of scholarly imagination. This is most valuable work of methodology in action.

Jackson notes that resistance to marginalia comes from some librarians and teachers who consider inscription as defacing property. Bookstores also generally sell marked-up books at a discount. Yet Jackson demonstrates that marginal comments may in fact actually raise the value of such books.

What is the significance of marginalia? Imagine the permutations. How do repeat readers treat their initial comments? Do subsequent or multiple readers leave a chain of commentaries? Jackson contends that this patchwork, or scratchwork, suspended in the margins, contains precious revelations about the individual and community reading experience.

Jackson examines in great detail the psychology of marginalia and the motivation of the inscriber. Were the comments candid, did they anticipate being read by a subsequent reader, were they in pencil or ink? Coleridge certainly knew his comments would be read by his contemporaries. Jackson located 386 copies of James Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, roughly half of which contained readers' marks. She concludes that "Boswell's readers were looking for help with their own lives and were most struck by those places in which there was something at stake for them personally." By contrast, Alfred Russel Wallace's *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* (1870) a contemporary of Charles Darwin, contains the comment, "This is an excellent example of Mr. W's curious combination of fine individual observation & defective powers of reasoning," and a copy of *The Education of Henry Adams* located at the University of Texas Library contained the following note: "The more he was educated, the less he understood."

Jackson has accomplished a mighty feat in the history of reading by coordinating thousands of shards of marginalia into a cohesive, informative, well-written, and enjoyable study. I say with respect and sincerity, H. J. Jackson is a reader's reader.

Oliver B. Pollak

University of Nebraska at Omaha



George L. Justice and Nathan Tinker, eds. *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas: Manuscript Publication in England, 1550-1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. x, 245pp. ill., index. ISBN 0-521-80856-1 (cloth). £40.00/\$60.00.

This collection contextualizes women's writing within coexisting manuscript and print cultures, an intersection particularly associated with contributor Margaret Ezell. Its nine essays collectively present women's manuscript publication not as a reflection of cultural restriction or authorial diffidence, but – as Justice summarizes – of “social and technological choices...made in positive terms for the most part”(5). Although the detailed case studies of manuscripts and milieus attest to the specificity of women writers' cultural production, cumulatively they also confirm some of the advantages of manuscript production identified by Ezell, including control of the text and its interaction with its audience(s).

Controlling distribution and reception was certainly one advantage of the manuscript, a preferable medium for disseminating political or religious heterodoxy. Leigh Eicke sensibly links Jane Barker's “politically dangerous” Jacobite politics with her use and representation of manuscript culture; Debra Rienstra and Noel Kinnamon's essay on the Sidney-Pembroke psalter likewise links that text's restriction to manuscript with what a later editor-scribe apparently felt was its theological idiosyncrasy.

Controlling one's image and audience might motivate an author to move between media. Kathryn King reconsiders Elizabeth Singer Rowe's retirement from periodical publication as a rehabilitation of her image, as she sought the privacy and prestige of manuscript correspondence with the Countess of Hertford and her intellectual and social associates. But later desiring a larger audience for her religious views, Rowe carefully negotiated her anonymous return

to the greater “cultural power” of print (173). Print, by the end of this period, offered Frances Burney privacy and independence as well as an audience: Justice analyzes Burney's representation of manuscript culture in her unpublished play “The Witlings,” arguing that as a published novelist she ultimately rejected “the controls imposed by literary communities,” realizing her “fiscal and artistic ambitions” (202).

Indeed, the dedication to royalty of several of the manuscripts considered here epitomizes the evident literary and social ambitions of their writers as they exploited the manuscript medium's exclusivity and adaptability to a specific audience. The Countess of Pembroke's refusal to print her completion of her brother Philip Sidney's metrical *Psalmes* preserved the poems' prestige, argues Margaret Hannay, increasing the worth of the presentation copy to Queen Elizabeth. Jane Barker claims to have presented a manuscript of her Jacobite poetry (1700/01) to the Prince of Wales (138). And the Lansdowne manuscript associated with Anne, Lady Southwell, thoroughly analyzed by Victoria Burke, is “presented for a royal audience,” albeit posthumously, by Southwell's second husband (108). Such posthumous collection and circulation of women's writings reveals not only their family's ambitions, but also the writer's own. In her survey of posthumous publication of manuscripts, Ezell enumerates Ann, Lady Halkett among authors who (like Rowe) “took steps to facilitate the printing of her texts” (126). Manuscript writing is not inherently modest.

Many of the networks reconstructed here are courtly or aristocratic, but there is ambitious activity at their peripheries. Michael Brennan ingeniously reconstructs and interprets Ben Jonson's pointedly self-interested influence on the literary activities and image of the well-connected Lady Mary Wroth. This typically pervasive integration of literary and social activities is sensitively epitomized in Isobel Grundy's comparison of the manuscript poetry of Lady Mary Pierrepont and her daughter Mary Wortley Montagu, two aristocratic teenagers under social stress. Grundy draws out the contrasts in the girls' characters and their cultures, showing how studies like these contribute to both literary and cultural history.

Carol Percy

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Katerina Kelly, *Refining Russia: Advice Literature, Polite Culture, & Gender from Catherine to Yeltsin*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. I-xliv, 438 pp. ill. ISBN 0-19-815987-0. £55.00/\$85.00.

The author of this ambitious book is a leading scholar of Russian culture. By exploring discourses on education, behavior, morality, European mores, self-help, and all manner of advice over more than two hundred years, she illuminates a wide range of subjects. For this alone, historians, literary specialists, and scholars of Russian print culture are in her debt. There is hardly an aspect of the Russian experience about which Professor Kelly does not have something significant to say. Demographers often consider a sample that extends over a long period of time more interesting than a short dense one, and this case proves the rule. Looking at these interlocking commentaries reminds us that Russians were constantly preoccupied with efforts to improve their behavior and standing with a critical eye both to differences in their own social hierarchies but also to practices in Western Europe and America. This perpetual nervous glance at foreign rivals distinguishes Russia from other nations. Professor Kelly's account of Russians' concern to improve themselves, whether in table manners or taste in music, is a timely reminder of how important cultural prestige has been to Russians of all classes from the eighteenth century until the present day.

The author's strategy of gathering all manner of prescriptive discourses beside religious ones yields large insights into the Russian experience. The first is that although Russian behavior and mores often diverged sharply from those found in Western Europe and the United States, the general advice proffered its citizens, whether it came from the rulers, institutions, or individual improvers and preachers, was remarkably similar. The second is that public behavior was usually unaffected these efforts, despite their intensity and repetitiveness. In each case, however, the author raises more questions than she answers. Her eclectic strategy of treating such diverse commentaries as a single discourse hinders consideration of either the production or reception of these messages, since the authors and readers she considers have so little in common. Problems also arise from

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her lack of a comparative framework. Although she sporadically compares particular commentaries with those of other nations, the lack of a focus on common genres, such as cookbooks, guides to success, or health advice weakens such comparisons. The reader wonders again and again, whether a particular form of instruction is different from or similar to what one would find at the same time elsewhere in the developed world. Nevertheless, the specific comparisons she does make are fascinating, such as her discussion of Russian translations of the works of Samuel Smiles.

In sum, the strengths of the volume far outweigh its weaknesses. Historians concerned with different social groups from the nobility to the Soviet elite will learn a great deal from her discussions of the role of educative discourses in the formation of social identities. Literary scholars will value her observations on the place of these discourses within Russian literary culture. Specialists interested in gender will learn from her discussion of the separation of private and public spheres. The volume has a helpful bibliography of texts, several useful tables, and an index. Illustrations add to the pleasure of reading the book.

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Martyn Lyons and John Arnold, eds. *A History of the Book in Australia 1891-1945*. St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2001. xix, 444pp. ill. ISBN 0 7022 3234 3. \$45.95

So many national book histories are in progress that SHARP schedules special meetings for their editors in conjunction with its annual conference. We have all become familiar with the problems of condensing a vast, frequently segmented, subject. Fitting vast histories of printing fit into a manageable space is a tremendous challenge, as editors and authors wrestle with problems of chronology and intra-national diversity, while also attempting to keep an eye on the international context.

How have the Australian editors dealt with these problems? On the whole, very well. The book is organized in four sections: Publishing and Printing, Bookshops and Libraries, Genres and their place in the Market, and Reading. Thirty-six pages are devoted to

Notes on Contributors, List of Illustrations, Select Bibliography and Index. Within each section there are general essays followed by case studies. The book's thesis is best summarized by its subtitle "A National Culture in a Colonized Market".

The twenty-five essays divide Australian book culture into many discrete pieces, so that the only chronological overview is presented in Martyn Lyons's short introduction. His emphasis on the stultifying effect of British domination is somewhat modified by many of the articles, with their focus on Australian productions. What Lyons calls "schizophrenic nationalism" — the debate between those who wanted "native" books and literary standards, as opposed to those who accepted imperial standards, or saw no contradiction between the two, is an ongoing theme. One of the strong points of the work is that chapter-writers sometimes disagree with each other in their analysis of the events and motivations that surround this theme.

Like all compilations there is a variation in the quality of the writing and the organization of the text. Deana Heath's work on censorship and Lyons' treatment of reading practices are particularly useful. Some chapters are almost entirely a case study; some of the case studies could have been eliminated or absorbed into main chapters. The two-page case study of *The Bulletin* should have been expanded, since *The Bulletin* appears in almost every chapter as a seminal influence in Australian literary culture, but perhaps because it was merely a weekly newspaper, it did not merit more detailed treatment.

Hard decisions about content must be made by all editors. However, there are two areas where I think their decisions were wrong. First, there is nothing whatsoever about the "book arts", and I find it hard to believe that there weren't Australians working in that important field. The other is in the short shrift given to authors — the primary producers in the communications circuit. In contrast to the seventy-five pages devoted to readers, one chapter of twenty pages is devoted to authors' remuneration, but no space is given to other aspects of the creative lives of those without whom there would be no Australian books.

Mary Lu MacDonald
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Linda C. Mitchell. *Grammar Wars: Language as Cultural Battlefield in 17th and 18th Century England*. Aldershot, Hants. and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2001. vii, 218 pp. ill. index. ISBN 0-7546-0272-9 (cloth) £42.50/\$74.95.

"Even in the seventeenth century," Linda Mitchell writes, "grammar was considered dry and boring" (5). In *Grammar Wars*, Mitchell convincingly argues that such an assessment was — and is — woefully mistaken. Scholars in the history of the book of this two-century period will take special note at the enormous number of English grammar-related books Mitchell has unearthed in her extensive research. The sheer volume of publications indicates the significance these works had in their historical moment.

Mitchell offers an unusually exhaustive account of these works, focusing especially on unconventional grammarians, in order to recover the sense of grammar texts as "argumentative statements about controversial issues" (2). As an English print vernacular rose in social function and prestige, the books that sought to codify and transmit it differed in their approach to a wide range of debates, from the basis of the rules that might govern that language, to the most effective way of teaching it and its writing, to the possibility of realizing the dream of a universal language, and to the relationship between one's language and one's social position. It was in their varying definitions of grammar and of what a grammar book should be, Mitchell asserts, that grammar texts signaled their positions in that wide range of conflicts.

Tracing the increasing dominance of rhetoric in the traditional triumvirate of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, Mitchell suggestively links the emergence and popularity of grammar books aimed to instruct various populations in a newly-defined literacy to the "self-generated identity of the middle class" (156). Thus, pedagogically oriented grammar books played a central role in producing middle class subjects who understood themselves chiefly in terms of their intricately connected morality and literacy. The language of "corruption" that so frequently appears in grammar books and publications on grammar of the period takes on a particularly charged meaning, as writers often imagined the perversion of language as having moral repercussions. Mitchell ends the book with

this discussion, describing the ways in which books on grammar identified women and foreigners as potentially corrupting agents in need of limited instruction.

Grammar Wars is an excellent resource for scholars studying the history of the book not only for this provocative claim about literacy, morality, and middle-class identity but also and chiefly for its pithy summaries of a very large number of early publications on grammar. The book is a valuable digest of lesser known texts, such as Jeremiah Wharton's *English Grammar* (1654) or Thomas Dilworth's *A New Guide to the English Tongue* (1751). While the emphasis on these texts comes at the expense of noting the complexity of the thoughts on language of such heavy hitters as Samuel Johnson (here briefly noted as a mere prescriptivist), researchers ready to explore the terrain of early modern publications on grammar will find here a helpful roadmap in Mitchell's book.

With such a wide array of early grammar books at her command, Mitchell's only fault might be her modesty. She shies away from theorizing too much about the works at hand, offering the abundant research she has completed to those more inclined to take on that work. Many a recent critical work has made much grander claims with far less documentation, and Mitchell is qualified as few others would be, to intervene in discussions about the grammar wars in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Britain.

Janet Sorenson
Indiana University

Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote, eds. *Under the Hammer: Books Auctions since the Seventeenth Century*. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2001, and London, England: The British Library, 2001. xiv, 242 pp. ISBN 1-58456-066-5 (Oak Knoll). ISBN 0-7123-4730-5 (British Library) £25.00/\$39.95.

From the Fabergé eggs of Malcolm Forbes to the gowns of Lady Di, the auction is a universal magnet. Scholars of Book History, who appreciate the printed book as primarily an historical artifact, need to be reminded of the powerful role of auctions. Bidding and sale prices are strong indicators of the commercial value of books as cultural commodities; they also gauge shifting book values in the antiquarian market.

Addressing this important intersection of bibliophily and mercantilism, *Under the Hammer* stands as a timely collection of essays. This is a useful gathering of papers presented at a book auctions conference held in London in November, 2000. The volume offers nine finely focused, illustrated essays which collectively supply a descriptive overview of the auction scene, from its inception in the sixteenth century to one of the most publicized celebrity sales: the Jerome Kern library sale of 1929. The volume's contributors identify the auction's early development and progenitors, its sale and bidding protocols, its early sale catalogues (Leiden, 1599), its tensions with competing booksellers, and some of the more interesting library sales in the States, in England, and on the Continent.

Essays by Michael Harris and Giles Mandelbrote valuably reconstruct the early

book auction in seventeenth-century London. Drawing upon advertisements in *The London Gazette*, Harris shows that the periodical press, especially the newspaper medium, assisted auctioneers by apprising the reading public of scheduled auctions, their character, and their range. Mandelbrote, in a useful treatment of "the nuts and bolts of the early auction," considers two Chancery cases; he also supplies an unedited transcript of selected auction catalogues of the Nathaniel Ponder book firm, which offers a rare window on the inventory of an active seventeenth-century London bookseller and the reading tastes which influenced his stock.

T A Birrell, using priced sale catalogues, constructs a plausible profile of the book-buying tastes and habits of the seventeenth-century London book auction buyer, a demographic which includes John Dryden, John Bagford, Narcissus Luttrell, and Sir Hans Sloane. Birrell shows that some of these buyers appreciated book value well beyond an ornate binding.

Turning to book auctions outside of London, Otto Lankhorst looks to book auctions in the Netherlands during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His research shows that book auctions in the Low Countries, which began in 1599, according to extant sales catalogues, pre-date London auctions. Lankhorst also discusses the holdings of surviving Dutch auction catalogues in European and North American archives.

Nigel Ramsay assesses the different kinds of activity at eighteenth-century London book auctions, with close attention to the large and diversified private libraries formed by Nonjurors. Ramsay sets his subject within

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large social and political contexts to show the sizeable contribution of Nonjurors' reading tastes to the London book auction market.

The final four papers concern individual collectors whose libraries were dispersed at auction, *circa* 1800 to 1950. Marc Vaulbert de Chantilly in "The Property of a Distinguished Poisoner," offers an exciting page-turner in this collection: the relationship between the murderer-forgerer, Thomas Griffiths Wainwright, and Benjamin Wheatley, a prominent 19th-century auctioneer. Arnold Hunt, in a detailed treatment of the posthumous auction of the Richard Heber library, offers a rare glimpse into the nightmare of cataloguing a large, dispersed library for sale at auction. Paul Needham, formerly of Sotheby's book department, treats us to the dazzling library of William Morris, a vast collection of ancient books, manuscripts, and incunables. The Morris library was sold *en bloc* to Richard Bennett, who then sold most of the collection to the Morgan Library, New York City, in 1902. The final essay, by Arthur Freeman, describes the sale in 1929 of the resplendent library of the American composer, Jerome Kern. Sale prices at the Kern auction, we are told, have never been equaled.

There is little that has *not* been considered in this volume, and a reviewer feels guilty of bad scholarly taste in suggesting oversights from such a pre-eminent team of specialists. What should have been acknowledged, however, is the classic work by John Lawler, *Book Auctions in England in the Seventeenth Century* (1896; rpt., 1968); Leona Rostenberg's *Library of Robert Hooke: The Scientific Book Trade of Restoration England*

(1989); and a few additional auction sales of note, such as the unique library of women writers formed by the Reverend Stainforth (Sotheby's, 1867; priced catalogue, NYPL) and the library of John F. Fleming, New York (Christie's, 1988), which this reviewer was privileged to use on a few occasions.

Maureen E. Mulvihill
Princeton Research Forum, Princeton, NJ

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